THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS: (SHRI M.M. JACOB): (a) Yes, Sir. Three criminal cases have been registered in the recent past in this regard and 16 persons arrested.

(b) to (d) (i) Seven persons have been arrested in case FIR No. 85 dated 4-3-1991 u/s 419/420/468/471/472/473 IPC, Police Station Lajpet Nagar (South). The following incriminating documents have been seized:—

83. Indian passports; 30 US citizenship cards; 2 Canadian citizenship cards; 75 New York driving Cards; 10 notes of 100 dollars denomination; one currency note of hundred rupees; 20 seals/dyes of Embassis of USA and Middle-East; 16 negatives of photographs affixed on forged passports; 160 USA green-cards and 30 multiple entry visas of UAE.

(ii) 5 persons have been arrested in case FIR No. 198 dated 5-7-1991 u/s 471/468/420 IPC, Police Station Gokalpuri (North-East). The following incriminating documents have been seized:—

4000 forged passports, driving licences and large quantity of printed documents.

(iii) 4 persons have been arrested in case FIR No. 110 dated 8-3-1991 u/s 420/468/471/120-B IPC, Police Station Mandir Marg, New Delhi. The following incriminating documents have been seized:—

Eight fake passports of Singapore alongwith blank visa/visa-stickers of U.K., West-Germany and Canada.

Damage to Aqueduct of Bhakra Canal

1297. SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD:

SHRI M.V. CHANDRA SHEKARA MURTHY:

SHRI ASHOK ANAND RAO DESHMUKH:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the militants in Punjab have damaged an aqueduct of the main Bhakra Canal with rockets;

(b) if so, the facts and details thereof;

(c) whether the culprits have since been arrested; and

(d) the action propose to be taken to provide security to Bhakra Canal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS: (SHRI M.M. JACOB): (a) and (b) According to available information, on 6th July, 1991, some unidentified terrorists fired two rockets on Budhki Nadi Aqueduct situated on Main Bhakra Line. As a result there was a minor leakage of water.

(c) and (d) No arrests have been reported so far. However, the State Government has been told to provide full and adequate security to the Canal.

Price of Steel

1298. SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the price of steel has alarmingly gone up in the retail market during 1991;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by the Union Government to reduce the steel price?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) and (b) Open market prices of iron and steel are governed by demand and supply conditions. There has been some increase in the open market prices of several iron and steel items in some areas. There could be various factors for this including the restricted availability of imported materials, e.g. pig iron, steel melting scrap, etc.

There is no formal control on the prices of steel. However, there has been no recent increase in the prices of iron and steel produced by the main producers and administered by the Joint Plant Committee, except for a small increase from 24/25th July, 1991 following increase in the special excise duty.

(c) Reduction in import duty by 10% each on steel melting scrap and pig iron in the Union Budget may provide some relief to the industry.

Imports of Iron and Steel

1299. SHRI BHAGEY GOBARDHAN: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) the value and quantity of iron and steel imported respectively during the last three years;

(b) the reasons for their import; and

(c) the steps being taken to meet the requirement through indigenous production?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) Quantity and value of imports of iron & steel respectively during the last three years is given below:

Quantity : in million tonnes
Value : in Rs. Crores

Year	*Iron (including Pig iron, Sponge iron & Hot Briquetted iron)*		*Saleable Steel*	
	Quantity	*Value*	*Quantity*	*Value*
1988-89	0.32	76	1.72	1420
1989-90	0.52	161	1.47	1572
1990-91	0.23	74	1.28	1397

NB : Imports from 4 major Indian Ports only; authoritative figures are not yet available from the Directorate General of ommercial Intelligence and Statistics.

(b) Imports are resorted to supplement the indigenous production, to the extent possible within the overall constraints of availability of foreign exchange.

(c) Indigenous production of iron and steel is sought to be increased through inter-alia, the following measures:

Modernisation of steel plants and improved maintenance of plant and equipment for achieving increased productivity.

Monitoring of supply of inputs, particularly coal and power, to the steel plants for ensuring uninterrupted production.

Increase in captive power generation.